

Serial Number 10/696,976

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REMARKS

In view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the patent application identified above and withdraw the present rejection. Claims 1-19 are pending in the present application, of which Claims 3, 6, 9, 18 and 19 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12-17 currently stand rejected.

The Examiner stated that Claim 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base independent claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have so rewritten Claim 11.

35 U.S.C. § 121:

The Examiner objected that the present application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species:

Group I	Figures 1, 2 and 5-8
Group II	Figures 3 and 4
Group III	Figure 9
Group IV	Figure 10
Group V	Figure 11

As requested for the purpose of prosecuting the present application, Applicants confirm the provisional election of Group I, currently recited in Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10-17.

37 C.F.R. § 1.83:

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a), regarding the "textured inner surface of the gripper" in Claim 16. Applicants have canceled Claim 16.

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Specification:

The Examiner objected to the disclosure on page 5, line 7, regarding a period after reference numeral 18. Applicants are unable to find such a period in either paper or electronic copies. In any event, the Examiner is invited to correct any extraneous punctuation with an Examiner's amendment.

35 U.S.C. §102:

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Sampson (U.S. 4,929,236). Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references fail to teach or suggest the present invention, as recited in the Claims. For example, Claim 1 includes the following limitations, among others:

a tubular gripper surrounding a portion of the catheter shaft, the gripper defining inner and outer surfaces; the gripper outer surface having a plurality of outwardly protruding ridges extending transversely in a ring around the outer surface of the gripper; the *gripper inner surface and an outer surface of the hub having a matching indentation and protrusion for a releasable interference fit which tends to releasably hold the gripper in an initial position;*

wherein the gripper is movable from the initial position to a desired position, at least a portion of the gripper being flexible so that it can be temporarily squeezed to cause at least a portion of the gripper inner surface to contact a portion of an outer surface of the catheter shaft to that the gripper can transmit frictional forces to the catheter shaft;

when the squeezing pressure is released, the gripper tends to resiliently return to its original shape; such that the gripper may be moved to a second desired position on the catheter shaft.

Among other limitations, the cited references fail to teach or suggest "the gripper inner surface and an outer surface of the hub having a matching indentation and protrusion for a releasable interference fit which tends to releasably hold the gripper in an initial position".

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In addition, the Examiner stated that the "strain relief tube is considered by the Examiner as element 34." However, the Sampson reference teaches away from such an interpretation. For example:

Next, the snap-lock fitting 42 is slid up to the port body and snaps into the receptacle 22 of the port.

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This placement of the snap-lock fitting also provides for stress relief of the catheter in case of bending on the barbed fitting.

(Sampson, column. 4, line 68 - column 5, line 2.) In other words, Sampson teaches that the "snap-lock fitting 42" "provides for stress relief", which teaches away from interpreting "multiple flanged or barbed section 34" as a strain relief tube.

35 U.S.C. §103:

The Examiner rejected Claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sampson in view of Engelson et al. (U.S. 6,221,061).

The Examiner rejected Claims 12, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sampson.

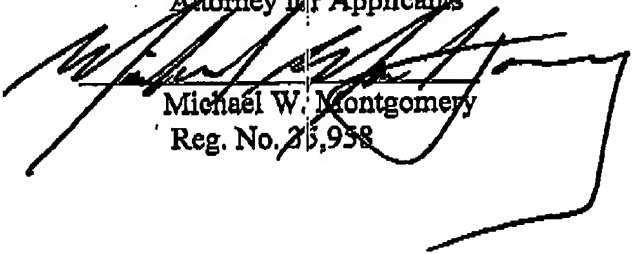
The Examiner rejected Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sampson.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited reference fail to teach or suggest the present invention, for the reason set forth above.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to allow the present invention.

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